

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VIENTI 00257 310554Z

14-L

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SS-14 INR-05 H-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00

PM-03 CIAE-00 DHA-02 IO-03 DODE-00 /041 W

----- 120169

R 310500Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6015

JCRC SAMAE SAN THAI

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

JCS/OSD(ISA)

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 257

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, NOHS, VS, US

SUBJECT: RETURN OF MARINE REMAINS FROM SAIGON

REF: A. VIENTIANE 0230 (290128Z JAN 76), B. JCRC 291014Z
JAN 76, C. CINCPAC 292226Z JAN 76, D. STATE 022741
(300018Z JAN 76)

1. INFORMATION REGARDING MARINES OUTLINED IN REF B WAS
GIVEN TO UNHCR DEPUTY REP ZENGER DURING MEETING WITH
POLITICAL COUNSELOR AND COLONEL VAUGHN AT 1645 HOURS
30 JANUARY 1976. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ACQUIRED BY
USMC FROM NOK AND TELEPHONED BY JCRC EVENING 30 JANUARY WAS PASSED
TO ZENGER MORNING OF 31 JANUARY. INFORMATION FOR HAN
CONTAINED IN REF D WAS PASSED AT SAME TIME BY INFORMAL LETTER
FROM POL COUNSELOR. ALSO PASSED LIST OF AMCITS IN SAIGON,
PREPARED BY EMBASSY BANGKOK.

2. THRUST OF ZENGER'S COMMENTS WAS THAT DRV WILL PURSUE
MIA ISSUE ON AN EVOLUTIONARY, STEP-BY-STEP BASIS AND IN THEIR
OWN WAY. HE BELIEVES USG ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION WILL
GRADUALLY BECOME MORE ACCEPTABLE TO DRV BUT (AS WE ALREADY
KNOW) THAT THEY TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN ACCOMPLISHING THINGS FOR
THE MOST PART BY THEMSELVES.

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3. ONE SUGGESTION ZENGER MADE, WHICH WE BELIEVE HAS MERIT, IS TO PROVIDE DRV WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND COPIES OF U.S. NEWS ARTICLES ABOUT OCTOBER 75 REPATRIATION OF THE NINE AMERICANS, THE DECEMBER 75 RELEASE OF THREE REMAINS TO CODEL MONTGOMERY IN HANOI, AND SUBSEQUENT FORMAL TURNOVER IN CALIFORNIA. HE ALSO SUGGESTED WE FURNISH DRV, THROUGH UNHCR, MULTIPLE COPIES OF AT LEAST A SMALL SELECTION OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES ON PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, FORENSIC MEDICINE AND IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES. HE BELIEVES DRV WOULD ACCEPT THESE IF THEY WERE CASUALLY DELIVERED BY UNHCR ON AN "FYI" BASIS.

4. ZENGER EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN CIL FINDINGS ABOUT THREE SETS OF REMAINS TURNED OVER TO CODEL MONTGOMERY, PARTICULARLY ANYTHING THAT WOULD INDICATE DATE OF EXHUMATION OR COMMON AS OPPOSED TO SEPARATE BURIAL SITES. ON BASIS OF WHAT WE COULD TELL HIM, HE WAS UNABLE TO SUGGEST WHETHER DRV MIGHT HAVE FURTHER REMAINS ON HAND FOR TURNOVER. ZENGER REITERATED LIMITATIONS ON ABILITY OF HIS OFFICE IN HANOI TO OBTAIN INFO ABOUT MIA ISSUE BECAUSE OF "COMPARTMENTALIZED" NATURE OF DRV GOVERNMENT AND CLEAR LINKAGE FROM DRV STANDPOINT BETWEEN MOVEMENT ON MIA'S AND OVER-ALL ISSUE OF DEALINGS WITH USG. COMMENT: IT IS APPARENT, AS HAN WROTE (REF A), THAT VIETNAMESE "WISH TO AVOID ANY POSSIBLE ERROR" AT THIS STAGE.

5. FOR JCRC: RECOMMEND THAT, IN COORDINATION WITH APPROPRIATE AGENCIES, YOU ACQUIRE MATERIAL MENTIONED IN PARA 3 AND TRANSMIT TO EMBASSY VIENTIANE FOR FORWARDING TO HAN IN HANOI. (UNHCR HAS TWICE-WEEKLY POUCH SERVICE TO HANOI VIA SCHEDULED AEROFLOT FLIGHTS AND OFTEN UTILIZES SPECIAL FLIGHTS AS WELL.)
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